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## DOH Santa Rosa Calls For Quit Attempts During The Great American Smokeout

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**Milton, Fla.** – With the annual Great American Smokeout taking place November 18, Tobacco Free Florida in Santa Rosa County is using this observance to encourage people to make a plan to quit smoking using the free tools and services available to Floridians.

Tracing its history back more than 40 years, the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout marks a date when smokers are encouraged to use the date to either make a plan or to begin their quit journey.<sup>1</sup> This year, the American Cancer Society is highlighting tobacco-related disparities during the Great American Smokeout.

While rates of cigarette smoking have declined, some groups smoke at higher rates and suffer disproportionately from smoking-related illnesses. The health burden of tobacco use is especially high among racial and ethnic minorities, low-income individuals, the LGBT community and those with mental health conditions.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, lower-income populations have less access to health care, making it more likely that they are diagnosed at later stages of diseases and conditions.<sup>3</sup>

Quitting smoking can add up to 10 years to life expectancy.<sup>4</sup> The health benefits of quitting smoking include reducing the risk of heart attack and stroke, improving lung function and lowering the chances of getting an array of different cancers.<sup>5,6</sup>

*"Although cigarette smoking rates have declined, Santa Rosa County rates remain higher than Florida's average," said Kristie Beckstrom, Health Education Program Manager. "The Florida Department of Health in Santa Rosa County encourages residents to participate in the Great American Smokeout by quitting for the day and consider the benefits of quitting for life."*

Information on the history of the Great American Smokeout, national activities to support quitting and other materials can be found at <https://www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/great-american-smokeout.html>. Tobacco Free Florida's quit tips, tools and more are available by visiting [www.TobaccoFreeFlorida.com](http://www.TobaccoFreeFlorida.com) or by calling 1-877-U-CAN-NOW (1-877-822-6669).

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### About Tobacco Free Florida

The Florida Department of Health's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Since the program began in 2007, more than 254,000 Floridians have successfully quit using one of Tobacco Free

Florida's free tools and services. There are now approximately 451,000 fewer adult smokers in Florida than there was 10 years ago, and the state has saved \$17.7 billion in health care costs.<sup>7</sup> To learn more about Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way services, visit [www.TobaccoFreeFlorida.com](http://www.TobaccoFreeFlorida.com) or follow the campaign on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida](https://www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida) or on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla](https://www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla).

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<sup>1</sup> "History of the Great American Smokeout." American Cancer Society. <https://www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/great-american-smokeout/history-of-the-great-american-smokeout.html>. [accessed 10 August 2020.]

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Best Practices User Guide: Health Equity in Tobacco Prevention and Control*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2015.[Accessed 2021 September 21]

<sup>3</sup> Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. [Tobacco and Socioeconomic Status \[PDF--56.2 KB\]](#)[pdf iconexternal icon](#). Washington, D.C.: Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, 2015 [Accessed 2021 September 21]

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014. [accessed 10 August 2020.]

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS). (2014). *Let's Make the Next Generation Tobacco-Free: Your Guide to the 50th Anniversary Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health* (Consumer Booklet). Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health. [accessed 10 August 2020.]

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [A Report of the Surgeon General. How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease: What It Means to You](#). Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2010 [accessed 2020 August 10].

<sup>7</sup> Mann, Nathan M, Nonnemaker, James M., Thompson, Jesse. "Smoking-Attributable Health Care Costs in Florida and Potential Health Care Cost Savings Associated with Reductions in Adult Smoking Prevalence." 2016.